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Congressional

CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING SYSTEM

03/17/93

LETTER REPORT

CONTROL NO.	DATE RECEIVED	DATE OF CORRESP	DATE DUE	DATE DUE OLA(857)
9301214	03/17/93	03/05/93	04/06/93	

TITLE	MEMBERS NAME	REPLY FOR SIG OF
Senator	Herbert Kohl	BC

CONSTITUENT'S NAME

SUBJECT

HERB KOHL
WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4903
March 5, 1993

COMMITTEES:

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CATV notes
1214*

Mr. Alfred E. Sikes
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Sikes:

Enclosed please find a copy of a letter from a constituent of mine, Richard Adler, regarding implementation of cable regulations.

Any assistance you could provide in responding to these concerns would be greatly appreciated. Please mark your return



Clark Electric Cooperative

124 North Main Street
Greenwood, Wisconsin 54437
Telephone (715) 267-6188
February 4, 1993

The Honorable Herb Kohl
United States Senate
Hart 330
Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kohl:

I am writing you to express my concern about the Federal Communications Commission's Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) that was released on December 24, specifically as it pertains to the Section 19 programming access provisions of the recently passed cable bill.

I am the General Manager of Clark Electric Cooperative, a consumer-owned, not-for-profit rural utility that provides electric service to 7,000 consumers in Clark, Taylor, Marathon, Chippewa and Wood counties. In our part of Wisconsin there are many consumers for whom cable service is unavailable due to their remoteness. The only way these consumers can receive television is by using a home satellite dish. Until now, these home satellite dish owners have been paying discriminatingly high rates for much of the programming they receive over their dish. The cost for this programming to home satellite dish distributors is on average five times more than what cable operators pay for it - a difference in price that is completely unjustifiable.

My utility, along with hundreds of utilities like it around the country, worked long and hard to secure the inclusion of the cable bill's Section 19 programming access provisions in order to protect our consumers from the cable industry's price-gouging. When the bill passed, we were understandably pleased and hopeful that the discrimination would stop.

This is why we are concerned by the tone of the FCC's NPRM on the subject. The FCC seems to have had some difficulty understanding Congress' intentions regarding the cable bill. The duty you charged the FCC with is simple: to issue rules that will encourage competition in the video marketplace by bringing an end to the already existing monopolistic pricing practices of many cable-owned programmers. Despite this clear mandate, the FCC issued an NPRM that doesn't even admit that price discrimination exists.

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The Honorable Herb Kohl
United States Senate
Hart 330
Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

By writing this letter, I hope to impress upon you the reality of this price discrimination. For our consumers, it really is a dollars and cents issue, and it is completely unnecessary. It costs cable-owned programmers and satellite carriers no more to serve the rural home dish market than the Urban cable market.

I urge you to review the NPRM issued by the FCC on December 24, and help us ensure that rural residents of Wisconsin are protected against price discrimination by lending your voice to our objection to this NPRM. I hope you will encourage the FCC to completely fulfill their duty to you and the citizens of this nation by issuing regulations which will encourage competition in the video marketplace and bring an end to the unjustifiable discrimination against the non-cable video marketplace by cable-owned programmers. On behalf of the thousands of home satellite dish owners living in rural Wisconsin, I thank you for your support.

Cooperatively yours,

CLARK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE


Richard M. Adler
General Manager

RMA:vjm